

The Hyde Schools and Hoffman - Transforming Lives & Building Community -

During his tenure as a math teacher and school administrator, Joey Gauld conceived of the idea that each student has unique potential and should be encouraged to explore and use their gifts to the best of their ability.

He created the Hyde Schools in 1966, which is based strongly on character development and parental involvement. Today Hyde consists of a network of public and private boarding schools in Bath, Maine; Woodstock and New Haven, Connecticut; Washington, DC; and Bronx, New York.

Joey completed the Hoffman Process in 2007, at age 80. Since then, many Hyde parents, administrators, and teachers have become Process graduates.

Recently, Hoffman teacher Linda Hartka-Reiss spoke with Joey and Hyde School administrators / staff members Pam Hardy, Laura Gauld, and Joanne Goubourn (each of whom is a Process graduate) about the positive changes at Hyde since the Process was introduced.

For more information on the Hyde Schools, please visit www.hyde.edu.

Linda HR: Joey, last summer we launched the first Hoffman Process on the Hyde campus in Maine. How many teachers, administrators, and parents have now completed the Process?

Joey: About 75 or 80.

Linda HR: Wow, that's wonderful! What's changed for you, both individually and collectively, since the Process became more prevalent at Hyde? First, Pam, can you share what it's been like from the teaching and administrative side?

Pam: For those teachers and administrators who've done the Process, we share not only a set of tools, but a language. If we're struggling when trying to communicate, almost invariably someone will say, "Okay, where did that pattern come from?" Sharing the Process language breaks the power of the struggle. It's a reminder that, "Oh right, this isn't really me – it's not the authentic me – it's just a pattern I need to deal with."

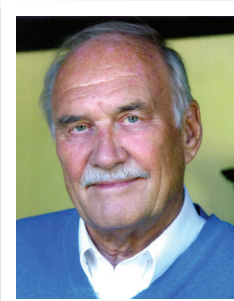
Laura: And collectively, we practice the

Process tools regularly. Recently we did an impromptu tools session where we pulled everybody on the Woodstock campus together, who'd done the Process, into my office, shut the door, put on "River of Life," did the visualization, shared, and then we all got into a gratitude circle. We instantly stepped back into the affection we have for each other. We also do elevators together... it's incredible.

Linda HR: Sounds like there's more compassion and tolerance within the staff and teaching body.

Pam: Yes, and a lot of levity too! (laughs).

Laura: One of the big changes we see is how we challenge our students, parents, and each other. When Joey first founded Hyde, it was a very confrontational place. We still believe in intruding intentionally into people's lives to try to help them; the phrase we use is "intentional intrusion." Hyde is not a passive place; it's an active environment in which we encourage both support and *challenge*. After our people went to the Process, how we approach



Joey Gauld, Founder of the Hyde School Organization



Pam Hardy, Hyde Schools Regional Coordinator



Laura Gauld, Head of School / Executive Director of the Hyde Boarding School Initiative



Joanne Goubourn, Head of School, Hyde Leadership Charter School, Bronx, NY

challenge started to shift.

Linda HR: How so?

Laura: We understand better how to *lovingly* confront. There was someone in Hyde's early days who said, "You can say anything if your heart is open to somebody." But often people close their hearts to muster the guts to say what needs to be said. Hyde's always had a lot of love, but it was quietly hidden behind the "challenge" type of confrontation.

Pam: I've seen a big shift when working with parents. Since the Process, we know that it's not about them; that they got their patterns from their parents. During a discussion I can focus on a person's unique and best potential and know that a particular negative attitude, emotion, disposition, pattern isn't them. I can even say to some parents, "I don't think that really belongs to you."

Linda HR: Joey, as founder of Hyde Schools, what can you add about post-Process changes?

Joey: Before the Process, I often felt responsible for helping a parent change because I realized that if I couldn't help the parent, it would have a strong affect on their kids. In owning that responsibility, a confrontation would start because inevitably I'd run into situations where parents would resist the change. The Process helped me let go of the belief that it was up to me to change them. We become much more effective when we let go, because if we continue to confront, sometimes *the issue becomes us*.

Linda HR: Character is very important at Hyde Schools, in fact in your students it's equally important to academic achievement. Have you seen a shift in character

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~ Joey Gauld

since so many people completed the Process?

Joey: Character is taught by example, and as people go to the Process and begin to let go of their negative childhood patterns, that's *character development*. The Process is making people into stronger figures in terms of character, which helps us set the kind of example we want.

Laura: I'd add that as parents, many of us can lose ourselves in parenting; our dreams go to our children. The Process experience, coupled with what we're doing at Hyde, gives parents a vision and helps them get back to their unique calling. Likewise, we in the teaching profession tend to put our needs last. It's exciting to see our teachers come back from the Process feeling like they've been given a gift.

Linda HR: Laura, what did you get out of the Process personally?

Laura: One, that I never really understood the patterns that resulted from losing my dad at a young age; and second, I found reinforcement of my Spiritual Self. All along I knew I had a Spiritual Self that was important for me, but it was reinforced to me as my "guide" and it's now the most important thing in how I live my life.

Linda HR: Hyde and Hoffman are in complete alignment when it comes to healing families. What shifts in marriages and parenting styles (including your own) have you seen in people who've done the Process?

Joey: We put a lot of focus on helping Hyde parents realize that the negative patterns they experience with their children were also experienced by their own parents and passed down from generation to generation. When they understand the generational aspect, they're more motivated to *really* deal with these patterns because doing so makes a difference to their kids. It's hard for us sometimes to do things for ourselves, but we don't hesitate to do them for our kids. We've also had success having the kids address negative patterns. They'll get a list of negative patterns, and the parents will get a list, and they'll compare notes and find out "hey, we share a lot of the same negative patterns." I often say to them, "Don't take ownership of the pattern. You didn't create it, but you are responsible for dealing with it."

Pam: I've seen shifts in marriages. In one family, the husband did the Process and I work with his wife. She hasn't done the Process yet, but I've seen her grow because he's been able to relax his expectations and demands on her. Because he's changed, she's growing as well. In my own family, my husband, on the first visit from my mother after I did the Process, commented, "I've never seen you so easy around your mother!"

Joanne: I see families drawn to having more honest conversations because of feeling more accepted. Personally I'm less judgmental of people. Before the Process we brought to our jobs our deficits, our personal unhappi-

ness, and the things that held us back. Now we bring our unique gifts.

Linda HR: Beautiful. Joanne, the Bronx school serves mostly underprivileged, broken families, making it a particularly tough environment to be effective in. What changes have you seen in your staff members who've done the Process?

Joanne: I see changes in each of us, myself included. Before the Process I felt like I was fighting something, like there was something in my way, and no matter what I tried I couldn't shake it. At the Process I came to understand negative patterns and

you, Joanne and myself are talking about creating a Hoffman pilot program for underprivileged high school juniors and seniors. What is your vision for the program and what do you hope to accomplish?

Joanne: I'm ecstatic about the possibilities for helping inner city kids because in these families, there's an extra level of the kids feeling held back. At school we'll tell them "you can do it," but they go home and their parents say, "you can't." Our work is to strengthen them so they can hold on to their dreams. Through the Process work, we'll get them to understand

reach their potential in spite of what they might be dealing with at home.

Linda HR: It sounds like you're using the work of the Process to deepen Hyde's culture and to forward Hyde's initiatives. What other pieces of the Process do you incorporate at Hyde?

Joey: I'll use the "Dark Side" with the kids, which makes sense to them because they know that we all have a bad side. And Negative Love Patterns have become an integral part of our Family Learning Center (FLC) program.

Joanne: Like Joey, I've seen the Dark Side piece incorporated several times at a student retreat. It's something that both the kids and faculty can understand. We have them draw the Dark Side monster – that voice that tells them they can't do something -- on a poster board. Then they destroy it and throw it away.

Pam: Just recently, we were in the process of senior evaluations, and a student said "I've spent most of my life trying to not be like my mother." It hit me powerfully because that was one of my patterns. "Don't be like her! Don't be like her." Since my Process it's been a joy to be like her in certain ways out of choice!

Linda HR: Do you encounter resistance from Hyde students when introducing Process ideas?

Joey: Hyde is a very disciplined, demanding program, and in this day and age, (chuckling) difficult is **not** what kids are looking for. A great thing about the Process is that it's another option. When you're ready to make the commitment to change, Hoffman is here to say, "We'll help you." It's important because with Hoffman's help, people at Hyde can do things we thought we couldn't do – it takes our work a step farther.

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I took a hard look at what went on within my family. When I came back to school after the Process I didn't have the held-back feeling anymore – I found my potential. I think each of us in the Bronx who did the Process let go of something that prevented us from giving all we had to give.

Joey: Regarding our Bronx Charter school, getting Hoffman to the inner-city family is at the forefront of what we must do. The people who live in the community label the problem "poverty," and the system throws money at "poverty" to solve it. However the real problem is the family, including the fact that often there's not a father in the home.

Linda HR: Along those lines, Joey,

what's happening in their families and their family patterns and they'll be better able to say, "I am myself and I am not my patterns." It's important for these kids to see themselves as distinct from their parents, while still appreciating their parents. Also the piece about forgiveness is key.

Joey: Reaching kids at this age is very important. At one point I gave an ACE Test (Adverse Childhood Experience), that measures dysfunction in a family, to 61 of our inner-city high school juniors. Every junior had at least one of the dysfunctions in their families and most of them had at least four, which indicates hugely dysfunctional family systems. Our hope is that the Hoffman program will help strengthen these kids and have them

During my Process I was asked to suspend activities that I was accustomed to practicing every day. At the time I wasn't sure I could do it, but I did! I was willing to change because I trusted you. That's what our students, teachers, and staff have

come to know. Hoffman has something that works, something that helps, but we've got to trust the path you take us on.

Linda HR: Very well said. Joey, Laura, Pam, and Joanne, thank you all for

sharing so openly and so eloquently, and thank you for the work you do changing lives at the Hyde schools. It's deeply inspiring.

Joey: Thanks to you and to everyone at Hoffman, too! ■

The Hoffman Process is an eight-day intensive residential course of personal discovery and development. The Process allows you to examine and better understand your life and reveals why you behave in the ways you do. To date more than 70,000 people around the world have used the Hoffman Process techniques to improve their quality of life and restore their relationships. For more information, please visit www.hoffmaninstitute.org